

Remarks/Arguments

Reconsideration of this application is requested.

Claim Status

Claims 1-49 were presented. Claims 6-38, 41-44 and 46-49 are withdrawn from consideration as drawn to non-elected species. Claims 3, 5 and 40 are canceled without prejudice. Claim 4 is amended to depend from claim 1 rather than from canceled claim 3. New claim 50 is added. Thus, claims 1, 2, 4, 6-39 and 41-50 are now pending.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 102

Claims 1-5, 39, 40 and 45 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Hirst (US 5,655,174). In response, applicant traverses the rejections and amends claims 1, 39 and 45 to more clearly distinguish over Hirst. These amendments find support in at least original claims 3 and 5 and paragraphs 0086 and 0087 of applicant's specification. Claims 1, 39 and 45, as amended, recite the following features (a)-(d):

- (a) dividing the printing dots into classes depending upon a number of printing dots formed in a predetermined area surrounding the printing dot subject to calculation in the surface of the latent image carrier;
- (b) counting a number of printing dots classified to the respective classes;
- (c) multiplying each of the counted numbers of the respective classes by each of weighted coefficients, and accumulating the products of the multiplication, thereby calculating the toner consumption amount; and
- (d) the weighted coefficients being predetermined for the respective classes and corresponding to a toner adhesion amount depending upon a number of adjacent dot in the predetermined area.

Thus, according to amended claims 1, 39 and 45, it is possible to calculate the toner adhesion amount of the respective printing dots in accordance with the state of a two-dimensional arrangement of the adjacent dots of the printing dot subject to calculation. Hence, it is possible to calculate the toner amount consumed in forming an image that is an assembly of the printing dots with high accuracy.

Hirst, by contrast, does not teach the above feature (d), and further does not explicitly state the content of the "weighted coefficients" of feature (c). Specifically, Hirst teaches the content of calculation for toner consumption amount at col. 4, lines 23-33 with reference to Fig. 4. However, Hirst does not teach how weights W1, W2, and the like in column 3 of Fig. 4 are determined, or the relationship between "12" or "16" in column 4 of Fig. 4 and the weight W3 or W4 in column 3 of Fig. 4.

Accordingly, since Hirst does not teach each and every element of claims 1, 39 and 45, Hirst cannot anticipate claims 1, 39 and 45 or claims 2 and 4 dependent thereon. The rejections under 35 USC 102(b) should therefore be withdrawn.

New Claim

New claim 50 depends from claim 2 and is based on paragraph 0087 of applicant's specification. Claim 50 recites that the storage stores image data that corresponds to three lines of the linear latent images, including a scanning line on which the printing dot subject to calculation exists and one line each of before and after thereof. According to claim 50, the storage capacity required for calculation of toner consumption amount can be made smaller.

By contrast, memory 34 (Fig. 1) of Hirst stores data corresponding to the whole image, which is entirely different from the storage recited in claim 50. Hence, for this reason in addition to those discussed above, claim 50 is not anticipated by Hirst.

Conclusion

This application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned to resolve any issues that remain after consideration and

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entry of this amendment. Any fees due with this response may be charged to our
Deposit Account No. 50-1314.

Respectfully submitted,
HOGAN & HARTSON L.L.P.

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